

The VMA rationale for participating in the Workmentor Project.

Why is VMA involved in the Workmentor Project?

1. Mentoring methods have been used successfully in many different situations where careful assistance is given one on one. VMA is a school, in school we usually work with groups of people and this leaves out too much of our possibilities of closely working with each person, his/her thoughts, prejudice, feelings of all kinds, skills, knowledge and ambitions.
2. VMA trains students in academic subjects and vocational skills but has only limited experience in following students during workplacements. The three way agreement between student, school / assessor and workplace is not clearly defined (VMA follows assistant nursing students during parts of their workplacement training).
3. The third aspect of the VMA view of the Workmentor project is the student group we are focussing on. We are working with students who struggle in school, some of them might be considered “at risk”. It seems that VMA is not offering them a suitable study so we need to ask workplaces for help. The objective is to train the students in general workplace skills. To empower them so that their view of themselves will allow them to seek further study or look for work.
4. The partners of the Workmentor Project have various experience of using Mentoring methods and different systems of working with students in workplaces. We feel this gives VMA the opportunity to look for and select methods, evaluation schemes and paperwork forms from many sources. We also feel that the discussion is important and the experience of seeing new things and hearing about how people do things in different places is very important.

When we pull all these together we feel that mentoring methods are likely to be helpful when we ask workplaces to take the students as a part of their study in school. We think the partnership and training here is going to prepare us for offering workplaces information and training in mentoring the students in the workplace.

This is the reason VMA decided to be a part of the Workmentor Project and this is the reason we are here to learn about mentoring. The next step is to transfer the mentoring methods to the workplaces we cooperate with.

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